

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of producing a lenticular novelty item at a point of purchase, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a user input at a computing device located at the point of purchase, the user input being indicative of a customer selection, the user input identifying one of a plurality of predetermined themes, the identified theme including a foreground image and a background image;

capturing a digital image of a person at the point of purchase;

digitally combining at least a portion of the background image, at least a portion of the captured digital image, and at least a portion of the foreground image to create a final composite image;

printing the final composite image at the point of purchase to produce a printed image; and

affixing a lenticular surface to the printed image to produce the lenticular novelty item.

2. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a graphical representation of each of the plurality of predetermined themes on a display device operatively connected to the computing device at the point of purchase.

3. A method as defined in claim 2, wherein the step of receiving a user input identifying one of a plurality of predetermined themes comprises the step of receiving a graphical user interface selection associated with one of the graphical representations of the plurality of predetermined themes.

4. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a graphical representation of the captured digital image on a display device operatively connected to the computing device at the point of purchase.

5. A method as defined in claim 4, further comprising the step of receiving alignment inputs at the computing device, the alignment inputs causing a change in relative proximity of the captured digital image and the background image in the final composite image.

6. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a graphical representation of the final composite image on a display device operatively connected to the computing device at the point of purchase.

7. A method as defined in claim 6, wherein the step of displaying a graphical representation of the final composite image comprises the step of displaying a plurality of two dimensional frames sequenced to produce a three dimensional illusion.

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8. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of positioning the person in a predetermined location relative to a digital camera.

9. A method as defined in claim 8, further comprising the step of positioning the person in front of a solid colored background.

10. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

operatively coupling a digital camera to the computing device before the step of capturing a digital image of a person; and

transferring the captured digital image to the computing device automatically in response to the step of capturing the digital image.

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11. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the step of digitally combining comprises the steps of:

retrieving a composite background image;

retrieving a composite foreground image;

deleting a portion of the composite background image to create a specialized background image, the portion of the composite background image deleted being dependant on the captured digital image;

deleting a portion of the captured digital image to create a specialized interior image, the portion of the captured digital image deleted being dependant on the composite foreground image; and

digitally combining the specialized background image, the specialized interior image, and the composite foreground image to create the final composite image.

12. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the identified theme includes a interior image and the step of digitally combining comprises the step of interleaving the portion of the captured digital image with the interior image.

13. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising the step of printing a lenticular registration mark on the printed image, the lenticular registration mark facilitating rotational positioning of the lenticular surface on the printed image and axial positioning of the lenticular surface on the printed image.

14. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the step of affixing a lenticular surface to the printed image comprises the step of affixing a lenticular surface including an adhesive material exposed by peeling back a cover layer.

15. An apparatus for producing a lenticular novelty item at a point of purchase, the apparatus comprising:

a user input module structured to receive a user input identifying one of a plurality of predetermined themes;

a memory device operatively coupled to the user input module, the memory device storing a foreground image and a background image associated with the identified theme;

a digital image capture module structured to capture a digital image at the point of purchase;

an integration module operatively coupled to the digital image capture module and the memory module, the integration module being structured to combine at least a portion of the background image, at least a portion of the captured digital image, and at least a portion of the foreground image to create a final composite image; and

a printer driver operatively coupled to the integration module, the printer driver being structured to cause a printer to print the final composite image at the point of purchase to produce a printed image.

16. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, further comprising a display driver structured to generate display signal indicative of a graphical representation of each of the plurality of predetermined themes.

17. An apparatus as defined in claim 16, wherein the user input module is structured to receive a graphical user interface input identifying one of the plurality of predetermined themes.

18. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, further comprising a display driver structured to generate display signal indicative of a graphical representation of the captured digital image.

19. An apparatus as defined in claim 18, wherein the user input module is structured to receive alignment inputs causing a change in relative proximity of the captured digital image and the background image in the final composite image.

20. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, further comprising a display driver structured to generate display signal indicative of a graphical representation of the final composite image.

21. An apparatus as defined in claim 20, wherein the display driver is structured to generate display signal indicative of a plurality of two dimensional frames sequenced to produce a three dimensional illusion.

22. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, further comprising an interlacer structured to generate a composite background image and a composite foreground image.

23. An apparatus as defined in claim 22, wherein the interlacer is further structured to generate a composite interior image using the captured digital image and a predefined interior image stored in the memory device.

24. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, wherein the integration module is structured to:

- retrieve a composite background image;
- retrieve a composite foreground image;
- delete a portion of the composite background image to create a specialized background image, the portion of the composite background image deleted being dependant on the captured digital image;
- delete a portion of the captured digital image to create a specialized interior image, the portion of the captured digital image deleted being dependant on the composite foreground image; and
- digitally combine the specialized background image, the specialized interior image, and the composite foreground image to create the final composite image.

25. An apparatus as defined in claim 15, wherein the printer driver is structured to print a lenticular registration mark on the printed image,

27. A method as defined in claim 26, further comprising the step of displaying a graphical representation of each of the plurality of predetermined themes on a display device operatively connected to the computing device at the point of purchase.

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28. A method as defined in claim 26, further comprising the step of receiving alignment inputs, the alignment inputs causing a change in relative proximity of the captured digital image and a predetermined interior image.

29. A method as defined in claim 28, further comprising the step of interlacing the captured digital image and the predetermined interior image.

30. A method as defined in claim 26, further comprising the step of displaying a plurality of two dimensional frames sequenced to produce a three dimensional illusion representing the lenticular novelty item.

31. A method as defined in claim 26, further comprising the step of printing a lenticular registration mark on the printed image, the lenticular registration mark facilitating rotational positioning of the lenticular surface on the printed image and axial positioning of the lenticular surface on the printed image.

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